



Montana

Department of Labor and Industry

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(HELENA) --- UNEMPLOYMENT RATE 4.9%

(HELENA) --- Montana's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased slightly by 0.1% in November to 4.9%. Montana continues to be well below the national average of 6.7%. The national rate increased by 0.2% for November.

"Montana's unemployment rate continues to increase due to the pressures of the national economy," said Labor Commissioner Keith Kelly. "The national recession has delayed seasonal hiring in retail and related transportation services, resulting in a seasonally adjusted job loss of more than 700 jobs in the trade and transportation sectors. Other Montana industries continue to show resilience by only posting small job losses"

The Department of Labor is still encouraging unemployed workers to file their unemployment claim online at www.ui4u.mt.gov in order to avoid the congestion at the call centers. Claimants can also go to their local Job Service Office and use the computer there to file their claim. A job service representative will be able to help them if they have questions while filing their initial claim online. "Although waits and turnarounds are more severe in other states, our call centers in Montana are still seeing a high volume of phone claims and we want to make sure that those unemployed workers get the benefits they are entitled to", says Commissioner Kelly. "Every benefit dollar those claimants receive has a 2.5% return in their local community."

Seasonally-adjusted payroll employment decreased by 2,200 jobs from October to November. The total number of Montanans who are working, including agricultural and self-employed workers, also decreased a similar amount, or by -2,174 jobs on a seasonally adjusted basis.

The seasonally adjusted consumer price index (CPI-U) decreased by 1.7% for the month of November, marking the second straight month of price deflation. Deflation was led by falling energy prices of over 17% in November; food prices increased marginally by 0.2% for the month.

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**Unemployment figures are seasonally-adjusted. Seasonally-adjusted numbers remove the effects of events that follow a more or less regular month-to-month pattern each year. These adjustments make nonseasonal patterns easier to identify. The margin of error for the unemployment rate is plus or minus 0.8 percentage points at the 90 percent confidence level. All questions relating to the calculation of unemployment rates should be directed to the Montana Department of Labor and Industry's Research and Analysis Bureau.*

The December 2008 Labor Situation Report will be released on Tuesday, January 29, 2009.

******* INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET *******

Monthly labor force information for Montana counties are available at:

<http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/cgi/dataanalysis/?PAGEID=94&SUBID=205>

Monthly Montana industry employment information is available at:

<http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/cgi/dataanalysis/?PAGEID=94&SUBID=199>

Annual labor force data for Indian Reservations in Montana are available at:

www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/?PAGEID=67&SUBID=121